

REVITALIZATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH THROUGHOUT ALL OF TIERRASANTA

By LuAnn Benton (Block Captain for 12 Years)

We all know the police can't be everywhere, but with each and every one of our eyes and ears being more attentive and knowing what to look out for we can help them fight crime in our community more effectively. Neighborhood Watch works in conjunction with the police, not in place of them. For instance, when an incident occurs at one end of town, the victim or observer will first call the police, then email his/her block captain who, in turn, forwards it to their area coordinator. By sending out just one email this area coordinator will disseminate the information to all other area coordinators, who each will send it on to "their" block captains, each of whom will then pass it along to their NW residents. This completes the circle of important information going out to the entire community. Although the information will arrive in homes at different times based upon when emails are opened and the information sent on, at least everyone knows what's happening and can be more vigilant in their observations from the information they received.

What I and several other block captains would like to do, with the help and support of Police Service Officer Brenda Clark, Tierrasanta Community Council (TCC) members, David Ferguson and Lou Binford, San Diego City Councilmember, Marti Emerald and her Council Representative, Nathan Batchelder, is to revitalize and enhance NW by expanding the program throughout Tierrasanta residents, creating a Business Watch, and establishing a more functional means of communicating amongst all Tierrasanta residents when crimes occur.

The enhanced NW program will consist of area coordinators, people who work with and support a number of block captains in their area. There are block captains who are highly motivated individuals who welcome all newcomers and maintain up-to-date lists of names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses from residents within their own NW area, whether from residential homes, condos, or apartments. And a block captain can choose how big a coverage area they want to include – just their immediate block, or further. The last component but the most critical to NW is the police department. They are the initiators and overseers of this program, the ones who respond to our emergent and non-emergent phone calls and are our main support.

We hope you'll be encouraged to hold one of these positions as they should be simple to perform and not a burden. If you're interested in being a block captain or area coordinator at all, please contact Police Service Officer Clark at 858-495-7942 for more information. To become a block captain you and your NW residents will meet with Officer Clark for one meeting to get your NW program up and running. If you've ever been through the Block Captain Academy before you will not need to set up an appointment. And if you'd like, you can combine several block captains and NW residences for this meeting. After this first meeting, further NW meetings are not mandatory but can be most helpful for everyone to get to know one another. I hope you'll join me and the other active block captains to see what we can do as a whole community for the wellbeing of everyone who resides, works or visits our unique "island in the hills."

Again, for more information, please contact Officer Clark at 858-495-7942.